

SENATE JOINT RESOLUTION 754

By Finney L

A RESOLUTION to honor and congratulate Coach Lin Dunn upon her induction into the Tennessee Sports Hall of Fame.

WHEREAS, it is fitting that the members of this General Assembly should pause to specially recognize those coaches who have performed their duties with uncommon devotion and enthusiasm and, through their magnificent coaching exploits, have brought honor and inspiration to their profession; and

WHEREAS, Lin Dunn, one such noteworthy coach, will be inducted into the Tennessee Sports Hall of Fame this year, a most befitting recognition of her outstanding accomplishments in women's basketball; and

WHEREAS, the Tennessee Sports Hall of Fame was established to appropriately recognize those talented athletes, coaches, and teams whose outstanding feats in the sporting arena have caused them to shine brightly in the eyes of their many fans and supporters; and

WHEREAS, Indiana Fever Head Coach Lin Dunn, one of the pioneers in women's basketball, reached another incredible milestone in her impressive coaching career by winning the 2009 WNBA Eastern Conference championship and reaching the 2009 WNBA Finals; and

WHEREAS, finishing with an impressive 22-12 regular season record, the Indiana Fever won the 2009 WNBA Eastern Conference championship after dominating the Washington Mystics in the conference semi-finals, and defeating the Detroit Shock, the defending WNBA championship club, in the Eastern conference championship series; and

WHEREAS, after a hard fought, back and forth, best of five series, the Indiana Fever finished second overall after a close loss to the Phoenix Mercury in the fifth game of the WNBA Finals; and

WHEREAS, rarely has there been a coach in the history of women's athletics that has cast such an extraordinary presence over the game of basketball as has Coach Dunn; and

WHEREAS, an energetic high school basketball star from Dresden, Tennessee, Lin Dunn attended the University of Tennessee at Martin (UTM), graduating in 1969; and

WHEREAS, with no women's basketball programs readily available at the collegiate level and only a handful of colleges even offering women's athletics, she was unable to play basketball while attending UTM; and

WHEREAS, through continual lobbying efforts for equality in athletics at the collegiate level by women athletes from around the country, Title IX, the 1972 federal law prohibiting sex-based discrimination in any education program or activity, was finally passed, three years after Lin Dunn's graduation from UTM; and

WHEREAS, after receiving her Master's degree in Physical Education from the University of Tennessee, Knoxville (UTK), Coach Dunn began her storied career as the first coach of the Austin Peay University (AP) women's basketball program in 1970; and

WHEREAS, after spending her first five years in coaching building the women's basketball program at Austin Peay University, she left to take over the women's program at the University of Mississippi, guiding the Lady Rebels to a 25-15 record and a twelfth place finish in the AIAW National Tournament during her one year tenure; she was named Mississippi Coach of the Year in recognition of her outstanding efforts; and

WHEREAS, in 1979, she accepted the head coaching position at the University of Miami, Florida, and spent eight successful seasons with the Hurricanes, posting a 149-119 (.556) record; among her many highlights as the Hurricanes head coach, she was the first women's basketball coach to offer a scholarship to a women's basketball player and she was named Florida Coach of the Year in 1980 and 1981; and

WHEREAS, on the collegiate level, she is perhaps best known for being the architect of Purdue University's women's basketball program, and she still holds the record for most wins in the program's history; and

WHEREAS, guiding the Boilermakers for nine seasons from 1988 until 1996, Coach Dunn's teams collected three Big Ten conference titles, made seven NCAA tournament appearances, four Sweet Sixteen appearances, and a trip to the Final Four in 1994; and

WHEREAS, during twenty-five illustrious seasons coaching on the collegiate level, Coach Dunn put together an incredible record that includes a remarkable .635 career winning percentage at four schools (447-257), leaving three of those schools, Purdue, Miami, and Austin Peay, as the winningest coach in program history; and

WHEREAS, moving to the professional ranks in 1996, she was named as the head coach of the Portland Power, an American Basketball League (ABL) team, in mid-season, and in 1997, she guided the team to a 27-17 record, an ABL Western Conference championship, and earned ABL Coach of the Year honors; and

WHEREAS, after the ABL ceased operations in 1998, she was named the first coach and general manager of the Seattle Storm, a WNBA expansion team; in 2002, she guided the Storm to their first appearance in the WNBA playoffs and finished second in the balloting for WNBA Coach of the Year; and

WHEREAS, joining the staff of the Indiana Fever in 2003 as a scout, she was formally added to the staff as an assistant coach in 2004; she spent the next four years responsible for a defense that allowed the fewest points in the WNBA during both the 2006 and 2007 seasons; and

WHEREAS, after amassing more than 500 victories throughout her college and professional career, Lin Dunn was named the fourth head coach of the Indiana Fever on December 12, 2007; and

WHEREAS, in her first season as head coach, she guided Indiana to the WNBA Eastern Conference semi-finals, and in the 2009 season, she took the team to the fifth game of the WNBA Finals, finishing second overall and winning the 2009 WNBA Eastern Conference championship along the way; and

WHEREAS, Coach Lin Dunn has established herself as one of the preeminent figures in women's basketball and is renowned both in this country and abroad; she served with the

utmost character and probity on the staff of the 1992 USA Basketball Olympic team, the 1990 gold medal winning World Championship team, and the 1990 gold medal winning Goodwill Games team; she was also head coach of the 1995 USA Jones Cup team which won a bronze medal; and

WHEREAS, offering her singular skills and leadership abilities while serving on the USA Basketball Team selection committee, the Kodak All-America selection committee, and as president of the Women's Basketball Coaches Association in 1984-1985, she earned the respect of her colleagues and peers for the quality of her work; and

WHEREAS, no stranger to awards and accolades, Coach Lin Dunn has been inducted into both the Austin Peay University Sports Hall of Fame and the University of Miami Sports Hall of Fame; and

WHEREAS, simply put, Lin Dunn stands among her peers as one of the preeminent basketball coaches in America, and her incredible career coaching record of 525-350 (.600) at both the collegiate and professional level, only serves to cement her prominent position in the pantheon of women's basketball coaches; and

WHEREAS, Coach Dunn, never forgetting her roots, makes her home in the off season in Dresden, Tennessee, and despite all of the accolades showered upon Coach Dunn for her award winning career and outstanding accomplishments, she is most proud of her family, including her father, the late Harry Dunn; her mother, LaRue Dunn of Dresden, a retired employee of the Tennessee Public Service Commission; her sister, Carrie Thurston of Chattanooga; her brother, Harry Dunn, Jr., of Nashville; and her sister, Mary Hautie Byrd of Mt. Juliet, as well as numerous nephews, nieces, and cousins from throughout the State; and

WHEREAS, this assembled group of state legislators is especially proud to pause in its deliberations to recognize this esteemed and legendary coach for her extraordinary accomplishments; now, therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED BY THE SENATE OF THE ONE HUNDRED SIXTH GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF TENNESSEE, THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES CONCURRING, that we honor and congratulate Coach Lin Dunn upon her induction into the

2010 Tennessee Sports Hall of Fame, and we commend her for her substantial legacy as a women's basketball coach, and wish her every success in all future endeavors.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that an appropriate copy of this resolution be prepared for presentation with this final clause omitted from such copy.